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# The Americana

A Spanish-American Comedy Drama  
in Three Acts

For Female Characters Only

By  
ANITA BRADFORD



BOSTON  
WALTER H. BAKER & CO.

1917

# The Americana

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## CHARACTERS

DOLORES ESTEBAN, "*Lolita*."

DONA YSABEL, *her aunt.*

JUANA, *a faithful servant.*

TONIA, *Juana's old friend.*

CHICHI, *a half-breed Indian girl.*

CARMEN } *friends of Dolores.*

ELVIRA }

EDITH MERRICK, *a young American woman.*

MRS. LESTER, *an American tourist.*

PAULINE } *her daughters.*

WINIFRED }

*Amalia, Inez, Mercedes, Maria, Luisa, Clara, girls of the village.*

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## COSTUMES AND CHARACTERISTICS

**DOLORES.** A pretty young girl of Spanish type, but not necessarily dark skinned. She is graceful and dignified in movement and can change to a proud and haughty attitude in a twinkling, but her general impression is of sweet and modest young girlhood. Act I. Her dress is dark red or green, with lace collar and cuffs and fancy sash. Some jewelry, old-fashioned preferred. Her hair is parted and falls in curls tied with a ribbon. She wears white stockings and black slippers. Act II. Colored skirt, white or light colored waist, ribbon at waist (they must appear to be old clothes). Act III. The fiesta costume consists of black velvet skirt (or satin), white lace waist, Spanish shawl of bright color draped over one shoulder and the other hip; silk stockings to match or correspond with shawl; dancing slippers. Wears much old-fashioned jewelry, earrings; carries fan. Red roses in hair.

**EDITH.** A typical young American woman of wealth, her own mistress. She must contrast sharply with Dolores, that is, be taller, fair complexion, decided in talk and manner, in fact a trifle slangy and abrupt, but for all that a splendid young person, impatient of control, but loyal to her convictions and generous and kind of heart. Act I. Her costume is a riding habit (preferably knickers and tail coat, if it can be obtained), stiff hat, gauntlets, whip, etc.; if necessary, a short divided skirt of khaki, Norfolk jacket and high boots may serve. Act II. White linen gown, plain hat, large or small, simple but chic. Act III. A pretty afternoon dress and flower trimmed hat. (Should there be time, she need not change to this until after burying the treasure, but it is not imperative.)

**DONA.** A gentle old lady, with silver hair, but of great dignity, kind and courteous to every one and devoted to Lolita, but with the formality of the past generation. One costume only is required: Black silk dress with narrow white ruffles or collar at neck and hands, black lace mantilla except in Act II, when a small black silk cap is worn.

**MRS. L.** A middle-aged woman, abrupt in manner and not very well-bred. Her traveling costume may consist of light silk suit of dark color, or silk dress covered by thin black silk coat, dark hat.

**WINIFRED.** Rather pretty, dressed in dark silk or linen suit, small tailored or Panama hat.

**PAULINE.** Plain, abrupt, and inclined to be sarcastic. Costume rather fancy for traveling, or in extreme style, as light frock, loud colored coat, fancy hat.

**CARMEN.** A quiet, pleasant little girl, devoted to Lolita. Rather shy, particularly when Edith comes in. Act II. She

wears light pink or blue dress, of cotton material, lace trimmed and with ribbon sash and bright scarf on head, which she removes. Act III. Fiesta costume similar to Lolita's.

ELVIRA. Proud and selfish, rather envious of Lolita. She may be rather pretty, but overdressed and trimmed, with much jewelry and ornaments. Act II. Bright yellow dress, trimmed with black lace and ribbons, bright red scarf. Act III. Fiesta costume, but very elaborate and overtrimmed. The hair of both Carmen and Elvira in Act II should be done up in curl papers and covered with broad ribbons with a large bow over each ear. Elvira's should be much larger than Carmen's. In Act III they may wear it hanging if desired.

AMALIA, ETC. Fiesta costumes of bright colors, hair plaited or in curls or arranged in Spanish fashion of large knot over each ear with two large bows. Care must be taken not to dress like gypsies.

JUANA. A big woman, stout if desired, dressed in dark calico or print dress, colored kerchief around neck and one over head. May be made up darker than Lolita or Dona.

CHICHI. Rapid of movement at times, but awkward and out of place in the house. Must be made up quite dark, wearing flesh colored stockings to match color of hands and face, flat, shabby shoes, or better, none at all. Hair copied from Mexican Indian pictures, dark calico dress, kerchief at neck.

TONIA. A bent old woman, dark and dismal. Gray hair, patched and faded dress, kerchief at neck and on head. May walk with a cane. Carries basket.

# The Americana

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## ACT I

*Time, early evening.*

SCENE.—*The Sala (parlor) of the Esteban home, in a small village of any Spanish-American country. Door C., back to balcony and street. Door L., to dining-room and kitchen. Door R. 1 E., to DONA YSABEL'S apartments. Door R. 2 E., to EDITH'S apartment. At L. of door C., a cabinet with a mirror over it. At C., a large table. R., between doors, a small table. Up C., back of centre table, a sofa. Four rocking-chairs are disposed around the centre table in a stiff square. Three straight chairs, one at R. of door C.; another above and a third below the door L., against the wall in each case. Another small chair below door R. The furniture should be old-fashioned, of black walnut or some similar wood, cane-seated if possible, and arranged stiffly. A painting of the Madonna, some few good pictures, religious in character if desired, scarves of lace and embroidery on tables or chairs, a vase, book, or some ornament on side table and on cabinet, etc., etc., may be arranged, but the general effect must be formal and give an impression of present poverty after past wealth. A clock of some sort must be placed or hung. If such scenery is obtainable, the room should have plaster walls, tinted white or color, and there should be no doors in the doorways to bedrooms or dining-room. The street or balcony door should be of wood, or blinds, without glass, and open into the room. Double doors would be preferable, painted white, with lock and bolts. To carry out the Spanish effect, it is necessary that the room present a stiff, formal appearance and the group of chairs around the table is very characteristic.*



*Enter JUANA with candle or taper ; she lights lamps, surveys room, noting magazines thrown about, chairs disarranged, etc.*

JUANA (*shaking head in disapproval*). Such disorder ! Would you look at the room—the state it is in with that Americana in the house. (*Goes to D. L., calls loudly*.) Chichi ! Chichi !

CHICHI (*hurrying in*). Yes, Juana, yes. Here I am. What do you want ?

*(Stumbles over a chair, hurting her foot ; sits on floor and nurses it.)*

JUANA (*scolding*). Muchacha ! Get up from the floor. I want you to clean up this room. See the litter ! What will Dona Ysabel say if she comes ? Put it to rights at once, lazy one !

CHI. (*who does not hurry at the work*). It was the Americana who did it, so the Dona can say nothing.

JUANA. To the Americana, but to me, to you, yes, many things.

CHI. (*taking magazines and going toward door, R. 2 E.*). Oh ! but it must be nice to be an Americana. [*Exit.*]

JUANA. Yes, nice,—but not for other people. The work there has been since this foreigner came into the house ! But I suppose the money she pays is very welcome. Ave Maria, to think that an Esteban should have to take money for lodging, and from an American ! (*TONIA enters D. L.*) Ah, Tonia, old friend, how are you ?

TONIA. Not very well, Juana, not very well. (*Shakes head.*) I'm getting old, you know.

JUANA. Nonsense, Tonia, you are not much older than I, and look at me.

TONIA. Ah, but you, Juana, have not led the hard life that has been mine. You have been here, with the Estebans, since you were a girl. All these years !

JUANA. And such happy years ! But things are changed now. What a family they were then, Tonia, do you remember ? And now — (*Sighs.*)

TONIA. Yes, yes, there was no one like the Estebans then. But now—I have heard there is a lodger, an American here. Is it true ? (*Doubtfully.*)

JUANA. Alas, yes. You have seen her ?



TONIA (*shaking her head dismally*). I have seen her.

JUANA. Such a woman! She wears the dress of a man by day, and at night—Ave Maria, still worse! They have no modesty at all, these Americans!

TONIA. So I have always heard.

CHI. (*who has returned from R. I. E. and overheard JUANA'S last words*). But men do not care for that!

JUANA (*angrily*). Wicked one! What are you saying? What do you know about such things? Some men, perhaps, but not the right sort. Not those like Don ——

CHI. (*interrupting with a laugh*). Don Francisco Calderon! Ha, ha, oh, no, he does not like it.

(*She capers around clumsily.*)

JUANA. How dare you name Don Francisco, the suitor of ——

CHI. The Americana! Ho, ho!

(*She tries to dodge JUANA, who catches her.*)

JUANA (*shaking her*). Impertinent one! Every one knows that Don Francisco Calderon is the suitor of the Señorita Dolores, our Lolita!

CHI. (*escaping and rubbing her shoulder ruefully*). Well, you can ask Tonia, there; she knows.

JUANA (*turning to TONIA*). What is this? What do you know?

TONIA (*croakingly*). The Americana and Don Francisco are much together. I ——

JUANA (*interrupting*). Nonsense; how do you know?

TONIA. This morning I saw the Americana riding by with Don Francisco. Yesterday I met them walking toward the river, the day before ——

JUANA. You expect me to believe that?

TONIA (*indignantly*). So you do not believe what I say? I, your old friend, I am a liar?

(*Starts toward street door.*)

JUANA (*following and trying to soothe her*). Tonia, my friend, I do not mean to offend you. It seems too much to believe, that is all.

TONIA. But it is true, Juana, and you will find ——

JUANA (*interrupting, fiercely*). It is the Americana that is

to blame for this. But you may be mistaken, Tonia—you are old —

TONIA. Old? (*Straightens up.*) I am a little older than you, Juana, and I am not a fool. Did I not see them with my own eyes? If you do not believe me, ask any one of the village; they can tell you.

CHI. (*who has been intently listening*). Yes, they can tell you.

JUANA (*bewildered*). But Don Francisco—he and Lolita are as good as betrothed. Every one expects it.

TONIA. It is the unexpected that happens. And with the Americana —

*Enter DONA YSABEL from door, R. I E.*

JUANA (*loudly*). That is it, that Americana—I wish —

DONA. Juana! Is it possible that you are gossiping about our guest?

(CHI. *laughs at JUANA.*)

JUANA (*surprised but not embarrassed*). But Tonia has said —

DONA (*severely*). Tonia is old enough to know better than to repeat the village gossip. Will you ever learn that American customs differ from ours?

TONIA (*meekly*). Si, señorita. (*To JUANA, with emphasis.*) Thank heaven!

JUANA (*nodding agreement. They walk to D. C.*). Good-bye, Tonia. I shall see you to-morrow. (*Exit TONIA. To CHI., who has been standing idly watching.*) Chichi, laziness! Get to your work. [*Exit CHI., laughing.*]

DONA (*kindly but reprovingly*). Juana, I have noticed before this that you do not understand the customs of Miss Merrick, but I insist that you be polite to her and conceal your feelings. American señoritas have more liberty than ours.

JUANA. I should say they do. Our girls are too sensible to spend their time in idleness, scribbling words on paper, reading romances, or walking through the streets with a man, or riding on a horse like —

DONA. Juana, this is foolish talk. Be silent.

JUANA. Ah, Dona Ysabel, would you like our señorita, the dear Lolita, to be as this Americana? Do you want her to dress like a man, to laugh and walk like a man, to appear in public alone with a man?

DONA (*horrified*). My Dolores? No! For the Americans it is all very well, but for our girls, oh, no.

JUANA. They may yet come to it. Already I see Lolita watching this Americana with admiring eyes. Soon we may see her —

DONA. Juana, you are a goose. Dolores would never do that. She is a sweet, modest girl. And even now she has a suitor, Don Francisco —

JUANA (*emphatically*). Don Francisco is riding with Miss Merrick, or walking with Miss Merrick, or talking with Miss Merrick, to-day, yesterday, every day. Tonia —

DONA. So this is the gossip Tonia brings you. And you believe it?

JUANA. It is true. Chichi has seen them, too. All the village has seen them—seen her looking at him with those bold blue eyes —

DONA. It cannot be true. Don Francisco spends his time with Miss Merrick? I cannot believe it, Juana; you are mistaken.

JUANA. Mistaken? Not I. You can ask any one. All the village is talking of it. Poor Lolita, she has no chance with this foreigner. She must sit at home and see her lover taken away from her.

DONA (*proudly*). The village dares to gossip of our Lolita? Insolence! Do they forget that she is an Esteban? I will not have it.

JUANA. Then you should send this Americana from your home. What does she want here? (LOLITA *enters from D. C.*) Let her take some man of her own people. She ought to be taking care of her home instead of living alone in a strange country.

LOL. (*placing letters on table*). What is this about Miss Merrick wanting a man? Don't you know she doesn't? She loves only her work.

JUANA. Oh, is that so? Then why must she work here? And why is she always with men, and so bold —

LOL. Juana, you must not say that. It is because you are so ignorant, you do not understand the ways of Americans. I think their customs are much superior to ours. I only wish I were an American!

DONA. My child!

JUANA. Ave Maria! Listen to her! (*To DONA.*) Did I not warn you?

DONA. Surely, Lolita, you do not mean what you say? You, Dolores Esteban, to wish yourself an American? It is ridiculous.

LOL. (*amused*). It may be an honor to be an Esteban, but it is rather stupid. Just think what good times I would have if I were like Miss Merrick!

JUANA (*coming over and speaking angrily*). Like Miss Merrick? Perhaps you would try to take another's sweetheart from her.

DONA. Juana, that will do. Let the matter rest.

(*Tries to draw LOL. away, but LOL. returns to JUANA.*)

LOL. What do you mean, Juana? What lying tales have you heard about my dear Miss Merrick?

JUANA. "Your dear Miss Merrick"! Poor innocent! It is no lie that she is riding to-day with Don Francisco Calderon, and yesterday they walked to Las Palmas, and the day before they drove to Casa Alta. By to-morrow —

LOL. (*laughing but a little anxious*). How silly you are, Juana. I asked Paco to be nice to Miss Merrick and take her places. It is quite proper for American girls to be alone with men; they think nothing of it. Miss Merrick and Paco are just good friends.

JUANA. "Good friends"? And is it only friendship that Don Francisco feels for this Americana? He is no American. And when did you last see your Paco?

LOL. (*still smiling*). Don't you wish you knew? There's Chichi looking for you, Juana. Aren't you afraid of some catastrophe in the kitchen?

(*CHI. has come to door and beckoned wildly for JUANA.*)

DONA (*going toward R. I E.*). Dolores is right, Juana, let us have no more of your silly tales. Go to your work.

[*Exit.*]

JUANA (*starting toward D. L., but returning after DONA goes*). I suppose Don Francisco has invited you to be his partner to-morrow?

LOL. That is not necessary. Paco knows that I know that he wants me, and —

JUANA. You call that an invitation? You, Dolores Esteban?

LOL. You will drive me insane, Juana, with your nonsense about Esteban. Besides—he did ask me.

JUANA. But that was before the Americana came.

LOL. (*impatiently*). Will you go? I will not listen to you!  
[Exit JUANA, *muttering*.]

(LOL. *looks after her, puzzled, a trifle worried; sighs.*  
EDITH MERRICK *enters from D. C.*)

EDITH. My dear Lolita, why so doleful? I am surprised to see you looking blue. (*Throws gloves on table, hat on chair; moves things so as to disarrange the room from its prim state.*) Well, honey (*putting arm around LOL.*), what have you been doing all day?

LOL. (*returning the embrace*). The usual thing, just as I do every day. Is it any wonder that I grow tired of the routine?

EDITH. I suppose not, but you are usually so happy. You are not like me. You don't have to worry over a career. (*Turns and sees letters, brightens instantly.*) Letters? For me?

LOL. (*nodding*). I think so.

EDITH. Good.

(*Takes up letters, glances over addresses eagerly, then shows disappointment, opens them slowly, and throws them aside with a glance.*)

LOL. Any good news?

EDITH. Nothing at all. (*Sits down dejectedly.*) Oh, how tired I am!

LOL. Did you have a pleasant ride?

EDITH (*trying to hide her disappointment over the letters*). Yes, indeed. The road is delightfully picturesque. You ought to come with me some time and see for yourself.

LOL. On horseback? (*Laughs.*) I fear Aunt Ysabel would not permit that. And—was—was Señor Calderon with you?

EDITH. Oh, yes, it wouldn't have been any fun without Don Paco.

LOL. (*slowly*). Then you do like him?

EDITH. I'm crazy about him. (*Looks at LOL. and laughs.*) Now I've shocked you. That's American slang, you know. But seriously, I do think Don Paco is splendid. I just adore Spanish men, anyway. They are so different from Americans.

LOL. But don't you like the men of your own country?

EDITH (*petulantly*). No, I don't. They are hateful. They want everything their own way and think a girl should give up anything for him—them, I mean.

(*Gets up and walks across room.*)

LOL. But a wife must give up everything for her husband.

EDITH (*laughing*). You poor, benighted child. You are behind the times down here. Catch me believing anything like that. (*In a speechifying manner.*) A woman's life is her own. She must give full expression to her talents. What right has a man, a mere man, to demand that a woman should give up her life's work, just for him!

LOL. (*shocked but fascinated*). But how can a woman have a career? Her work is to keep the home, and take care of her husband.

EDITH. Well, I guess not. Let him take care of himself and the house, too.

LOL. (*amazed*). The husband take care of the house?

EDITH (*wickedly*). Sure. Why not? After all these centuries it's time men had a taste of housework.

LOL. Men—housework! Ave Maria, what do you say?

EDITH (*laughing*). My dear, I have shocked you. Never mind, you don't have to believe my nonsense. I must not put notions into your pretty head. I don't want to spoil your happiness, too. (*Sighs; goes slowly to door.*) Now I must change for dinner.

LOL. You have an engagement to-night?

EDITH. A very important one,—to grind out about a thousand words on my last story. I wish it were the last. I'd like to throw it in the fire. I hate it.

LOL. You hate your stories, your work?—That you said you loved more than anything else in the world?

EDITH. But I don't—that is, I mean — Oh, dear, I'm talking more nonsense. Don't pay any attention to me, honey.

(*Waves hand and goes out R. 2 E.*)

LOL. (*smiling and picking up gauntlets from table*). How silly Juana is to believe anything wrong of her. She is so sweet and kind. I only wish I were like her. American girls have everything. (*Takes up EDITH's hat, puts it on, pulls on gloves, inspects herself in mirror and bows.* CHI. *enters in time to see this.*) Oh, deary me, I wish I were an Americana.

*(Sighs, then takes things off slowly, putting them on table ; walks to front of stage.)*

CHI. *(puts on hat and gloves and is in front of mirror copying LOL.)*. If only I were an Americana !

LOL. *(turning and seeing her)*. Chichi !

*(She cannot help laughing.)*

CHI. *(dropping things in confusion, picking them up again)*.  
Caramba !

CURTAIN



## ACT II

SCENE.—*The same. The next morning. The sala is in perfect order. Knocking heard at D. C.*

*Enter CHI. from D. L., and runs over to D. C.; opens it.*

CHI. Good-morning, señoritas, good-morning. Come in.

*Enter CARMEN and ELVIRA.*

CAR. Good-morning, Chichi; is Lolita at home?

CHI. Yes, Señorita Carmen. She will be glad to see you.

*(She stands smiling at the girls.)*

EL. *(walking in and sitting down primly).* Go and tell her we are here, stupid.

CHI. *(aside).* Yes, stupid. *(Goes toward D. L.)*

EL. What did you say?

CHI. I said she was in the garden, but I will call her.

EL. What a silly creature. I'm glad I'm not half Indian.

CAR. But she is good hearted and devoted to Lolita. I can't help feeling sorry for her.

EL. I don't. She is very impertinent.

LOL. *(entering, bringing flowers, and welcoming friends warmly).* Carmen—and Elvira, I am glad to see you. Sit down. *(She arranges flowers in vase.)* Aren't these flowers pretty and fresh this morning?

EL. When Chichi said you were in the garden, I thought you were probably digging for the "Treasure."

CAR. Oh, Lolita, if you should find it!

LOL. *(laughing, sits down near girls).* The Treasure? I wouldn't waste my time looking for it. I don't believe there is any such thing.

CAR. But all the village believes in the Treasure of the Estebans!

LOL. Well, this Esteban does not. Come, let's talk of something else. Just remember the fiesta is to-day.

EL. You should see my dress. It is the prettiest I have ever had for any fiesta. Are you going to have a new one?

LOL. Partly new, that is, all but the shawl. That, you know, was my grandmother's. But the rest of my dress is new and it is quite pretty, too.

CAR. I am sure of it, but Elvira said ——

EL. (*nudging her*). I said that whatever you wore would be all right.

LOL. (*laughing*). Thank you, Elvira, you are extremely flattering.

EL. After all, it does not greatly matter how we look. If that Americana comes, she will take all the young men.

LOL. (*laughing*). I wouldn't be surprised. Oh, girls, don't you wish you were Americans?

CAR. I? Oh, my, no!

EL. (*proudly*). Dolores Esteban, you should be ashamed to say such a thing. An American—I wouldn't be one for anything.

LOL. Well, I only wish I were. That is if I could be as charming as Miss Merrick.

CAR. Is she nice?

LOL. She is lovely.

EL. I should not think you would say that, Lolita.

LOL. Why not?

EL. Because ——

CAR. (*interrupting*). Elvira, don't.

LOL. (*looking from one to the other in surprise*). What is this?

EL. Well, if any one took my sweetheart, I'd hate them, American or not.

LOL. Oh, I suppose you have heard the same silly tales as Juana.

EL. It won't seem so silly this afternoon when you see Don Paco with the Americana, instead of you.

LOL. How do you know he will be with her?

EL. Didn't I hear her ask him?

CAR. Elvira, do be quiet.

LOL. Miss Merrick asked Don Paco? What is this?

EL. (*spitefully*). Yesterday when they were at your own gate, I heard her say—you know how loudly she talks—"Don't forget I want you to take me to the fiesta to-morrow."

LOL. And Paco said?

EL. He answered so softly that I could not hear, but I know from his manner it was not refusal.

CAR. For shame, Elvira.

LOL. I cannot — (*Stops, seeing EDITH enter, R. 2 E.*)

EDITH. Good-morning, Lolita. (*Sees girls, stops.*) Good-morning. (*To them.*)

LOL. (*embarrassed*). Good-morning, Miss Merrick. I—these are my friends, Carmen and Elvira.

EDITH (*warmly*). How do you do? (*Shakes hands with each who stands rather awkward and confused.*) I'm mighty glad to meet any friends of Lolita's.

(*They sit down, EDITH carelessly displaying a length of silk stocking, the two friends very primly, skirts carefully adjusted, looking in a shocked manner at EDITH. LOL. a little more reserved than usual.*)

LOL. (*politely*). It is a lovely morning, isn't it?

EDITH (*at a loss for words*). Yes, it is.

EL. We are fortunate to have such a fine day for the fiesta.

EDITH. I'm so glad to be here for this fiesta as I've never seen anything of the kind. You are going to dance?

CAR. Oh, yes, we all dance in the plaza, you know.

EL. And each man chooses for partner the girl he likes best.

EDITH. How lovely! I wish I were going to take part in the dance.

EL. (*with emphasis*). Don Francisco Calderon is a beautiful dancer.

EDITH (*surprised at her tone*). Really? Then I shall have to ask him to teach me.

(*EL. looks at LOL., as if to say, "I told you so."*)

CAR. (*to change the subject*). Oh, Miss Merrick, has Dolores told you about the Esteban treasure?

EDITH. No. Do you mean to say there is a hidden treasure and Lolita has never told me?

LOL. It is only a fairy tale. I don't believe in it.

CAR. But tell it to the Americana, Lolita, do.

EL. Lolita would prefer to talk about the fiesta.

LOL. (*starting*). Oh, I will tell it if you wish.

EDITH. I sure do wish, my dear; it might be just the thing for a plot.

CAR. Go on, Lolita.

*Enter CHI., D. L., and listens.*

LOL. The story is that one of the Estebans, an ancestor of

mine, was very miserly and loved money just for itself. All that he could secure he buried in old boxes in odd places, hoping that no one would ever find it. After his death his sons searched everywhere for the money, but only some of it was found and there has always been a tradition that more of it is still buried here in the garden.

EDITH. How delightfully romantic ! And have you searched for it ?

LOL. No, and I never shall. My father spent so much time looking for the treasure that he allowed his possessions to go to ruins, mortgaged his properties, and now we have nothing. The treasure has been a curse.

CAR. But if you found it you would be rich again.

LOL. If I found it. Don't forget that important little word, Carmen dear.

EL. I agree with you, Lolita ; it is all nonsense.

EDITH. Well, I don't. And I am going to look for it, too. (*Rises and goes toward D. C.*) I'm going right now and buy a spade to dig. Good-bye. (*Laughs and runs out.*)

CAR. Ave Maria ! It does not take her long to do things !

EL. What would one expect of an American ?

LOL. Miss Merrick is only joking. She does not mean it.

CAR. I think she is very nice, Lolita. (*Looks at clock.*) Elvira, see what time it is. We must be going. (*Rises.*)

EL. Yes, for it will take me some time to dress. Good-bye, Lolita ; shall we call for you ?

LOL. Please do.

CAR. And Don Paco ?

LOL. Don Paco can look for me, if he wants me. Good-bye, dear.

(*They all go out on balcony.*)

CHI. (*coming forward*). A treasure. Oh, ho, I am going to hunt for it. Perhaps I can find it before the Americana.

LOL. (*returning from D. C.* CHI. *runs out D. L.*). That Chichi ! What mischief is she planning now ? (*Comes forward and straightens chairs, fingers flowers.*) I wonder if what they say is true ? I have heard nothing from Francisco. Does he really think I understand, or — (*Loud noise of auto horn outside.*) Caramba ! What is that ? (*She rushes to balcony. Voices heard outside, then LOL. returns ushering in the Lesters.*) Will you come in ? Miss Merrick will soon return, I am sure.

MRS. LESTER (*examining room through lorgnon*). So this is where Edith Merrick has buried herself? Is she mad?

PAULINE. Did you ever see such a queer stiff place?

(*She wanders around room, pointing out its oddities to WINIFRED.*)

WIN. It is strange, but I suppose it is the custom.

LOL. (*bewildered at their rudeness*). Will you not be seated?

MRS. L. (*sitting down*). Do you live here?

LOL. It is my home. I will call my aunt that she may welcome you.

PAUL. Don't bother. It's Edith Merrick we want to see. Can't you go find her?

LOL. (*going to D. L.*). I will send the servant. (*Calls.*) Chichi!

CHI. (*coming in suddenly and bumping into LOL., then staring at the strangers. She is very dirty from digging*). Si, si, señorita, here I am.

PAUL. Oh, look!

WIN. What a funny mite!

MRS. L. And how dirty!

LOL. (*ready to cry*). Chichi, you miserable girl, what have you been doing?

CHI. Oh, señorita, I am so sorry, I was working in the garden.

LOL. Go and change your dress at once. (*Turns to the Lesters.*) I will go for Miss Merrick myself.

(*Goes out D. L.*)

PAUL. Did you ever see such airs? She will send the servant. And such a servant. These Spanish women are too lazy to lift their hands.

WIN. Don't exaggerate, Pauline. I've seen plenty of them working. And that girl is rather pretty, and quite refined too, in a way.

MRS. L. Winifred, you are so romantic, you will be having her a princess in disguise next. It is beyond me what Edith can see in a place like this. And when you think of her home, and all her money—she is mad!

PAUL. That's just the trouble—her money, I mean. She

has so much of it that she does not know what to do with it. It's a sort of white elephant, like ours, you know.

*(Points to bag she is carrying.)*

MRS. L. Another result of this awful country. *(To EDITH, who enters D. C.)* Edith, my dear!

EDITH. What a surprise, Mrs. Lester. Where did you come from? And Pauline and Winifred — *(Greets them all warmly.)* I'm so amazed I don't know what to think.

MRS. L. And we don't know what to think of you, Edith. What do you find to attract you in such a place?

EDITH. It's adorable—but how did you happen upon this far-away village?

PAUL. There's nothing far-away to a motor car. We've been doing the country and knowing you were here, we just up and came.

WIN. We are really on our way to Las Vegas, where an old friend of mother's has a villa. She married a Spaniard, you know.

MRS. L. I suppose you will be doing that next, Edith.

PAUL. *(maliciously)*. But what of Dick Hilliard?

EDITH *(ignoring PAUL.)*. I shouldn't wonder. The men here are splendid.

WIN. But aren't the conventions restrictive? I mean you can't see much of a man, can you?

EDITH. I can. Conventions never did stop me.

PAUL. Who is he?

EDITH. Who is who?

PAUL. The Spanish lover you've got. Don't deny it. I knew there must be some attraction or you wouldn't have stayed a day.

MRS. L. Edith, is it possible that you can forget Dick so soon?

*Enter LOL. at D. L.*

EDITH *(refusing to notice "Dick")*. Don Francisco Calderon would make you forget any one. Girls, you ought to see him. He's splendid. I'm simply wild about him.

*(LOL. stands still at this speech.)*

PAUL. I knew it. But surely no one so independent as you would marry a Spaniard. They bully their wives awfully.

EDITH. That's nonsense, Pauline. Don Francisco is the most perfect gentleman you ever saw. There isn't a man at home to compare with him.

*(Rather defiantly at the last.)*

MRS. L. My dear Edith, surely you are not serious. You should not flirt with a Spaniard, you know, they are terrible when jealous.

EDITH. I am not flirting.

*(LOL. starts, then goes out silently.)*

MRS. L. Then I am to take Dick Hilliard the news that you are engaged to this Don —— What's his name?

EDITH *(stiffly)*. It isn't necessary to take any news of me to Mr. Hilliard. Besides I am not engaged yet ——

PAUL. Not yet but soon. So that's it. Well, Edith, I wish you joy of your Spaniard. But a good old American will do for me.

MRS. L. Are you sure that you are happy, Edith?

EDITH. Happy? I've never been so happy in my life.  
*(PAUL. drops her bag.)* Why, what is in that?

*(PAUL. picks up bag which is heavy.)*

WIN. Careful, Paul, don't lose our fortune. *(To EDITH.)* That is our family bank; it wouldn't do to lose that.

EDITH. You mean to say you carry money like that?

WIN. Mother was so afraid the money might be spurious or counterfeit, so she got her letter of credit cashed in gold, and such dingy old stuff you never saw.

PAUL. It's a plagued nuisance, too, for I have to cart it around most of the time. Win would never think of it.

EDITH. And there is a lot of it?

MRS. L. *(looking cautiously around)*. About a thousand dollars, my dear.

EDITH. And you mean to carry it around like that? Why, there's nothing the matter with the bank-notes here. I've got some perfectly good ones myself, and don't have a bit of trouble using them.

MRS. L. If we had only known that.

WIN. We would not have had our romantic "Family Treasure" then.

EDITH *(suddenly repeating)*. Family Treasure? May I see



it? (PAUL. *opens bag; she examines it.*) It does look old—why I could—— Wouldn't you really rather have bank-notes, Mrs. Lester?

MRS. L. I certainly should, if they are all right.

EDITH. Well, I won't cheat you. Let me take this and give you notes in exchange. I'm not traveling and can keep it easily.

PAUL. I should say yes, come on with your bank-notes.

(PAUL. and EDITH go out R. 2 E.)

(LOL. *returns with tray, serves glasses of refresco and plates of cakes.*)

WIN. (*tasting refresco*). Um— isn't that good? What is it?

LOL. The juice of the tamarinds, señorita.

(*Passes cakes.*)

MRS. L. It tastes rather queer to me, I must say.

(LOL. *places remainder of things on table and goes out.*)

PAUL. (*coming in followed by EDITH*). Well, this is better. (*Shows her bag which is now light.*) We can sleep on this in some comfort. What's that stuff?

EDITH. That's tamarind refresco, and simply delicious.

(*They drink.*)

PAUL. (*making face and putting down glass*). Can't say I like it.

(*The others get up; she suddenly picks up glass and finishes it. EDITH sees her and smiles.*)

MRS. L. Well, my dear Edith, we can stay no longer, for we must reach our destination before dark to-night. We just stopped in to say hello to you. But we will send over for you and you can stay with us; it must be better than here.

EDITH. But I love it here. And Dona Ysabel and Dolores are the kindest of hostesses. I have no intention of leaving.

MRS. L. You are surely a strange girl, Edith Merrick; I don't know what to make of you.

PAUL. Put it down to Don Something or Other, and you will be near home. Good-bye, Edith dear. Take care of yourself—and him.

WIN. Don't mind Pauline, Edith. I hope you will be very happy. Good-bye, dear.

MRS. L. Good-bye, dear child. Let us know if you want us.

EDITH (*a trifle stiffly*). You are very kind, but I am quite comfortable here. Good-bye. (*They leave and EDITH waves good-bye from doorway. Sound of auto-horn. EDITH returns to room.*) Well, it does seem strange, when they are my own country people and friends, but—yes, I am glad they're gone. I wish they had not come at all. Winifred is not so bad, but Pauline, with her silly talk about Dick Hilliard. Dick Hilliard is nothing to me, nothing. [*Exit into R. 2 E.*]

LOL. (*coming in slowly after EDITH leaves*). They are gone at last. (*Takes glasses and plates and puts them on tray.*) So it is true; she has said it herself. And I thought her my friend. Oh! (*Takes glass and breaks it, throwing pieces on floor.*)

JUANA (*running in at noise*). Caramba! What is the matter?

LOL. Juana, you were right. Paco loves her, and I am forgotten.

JUANA (*trying to comfort her*). For that bold Americana? Oh, no. Your Paco is only a fool, like most men. He has lost his head over this foreigner with the blue eyes.

LOL. (*breaking down*). What will become of me? (*Sobs.*)

JUANA. Don't you worry, little one. He will come back to you if you get rid of her.

LOL. Get rid of her? Juana, what do you mean?

JUANA (*with menace*). There are ways.

LOL. (*frightened*). No, Juana, no. No harm can come to a guest of the Estebans.

JUANA. Last night you wished you were not an Esteban —

LOL. But it would be a sin!

JUANA. A sin? And is it not a sin for her to come between true lovers? And you, do you mean to sit meekly at home and let her take him? You wish to be like Dona Ysabel, perhaps?

LOL. Aunt Ysabel? What has she to do with it?

JUANA. It was the same with her. She was once young and beautiful and she had a suitor, but another —

LOL. (*interrupting*). An Americana?

JUANA. No, but with the manners of one. A bold, bad woman. Your Aunt Ysabel let him go. Ah, if it had been I!

LOL. (*fascinated*). What would you have done?

JUANA (*dramatically*). Killed her!

LOL. Juana! But if she loves him?

JUANA. Loves him? Do you think that cold American can feel love? No. All she wants is to play with men. They are her toys. Love? She does not know what it means!

LOL. And if he loves her?

JUANA. But he does not. It is just that she is different, so free. A little innocent like you cannot understand. But in his heart Don Paco loves you, I am sure of it.

LOL. But he has not asked me to dance with him at the fiesta.

JUANA. That is her doing, but when he sees you there —

LOL. I will not go.

JUANA. What, child? Have you forgotten the beautiful dress on which your aunt worked so long? It is not like those ugly American clothes, ugh!

LOL. But all American clothes are not ugly. And Paco likes them. No, I will not go.

JUANA. You shall go. Listen to me. Do you want all the town to say you are moping at home because an American has taken your lover? They will laugh at you, Dolores Esteban!

LOL. Let them laugh. I don't care.

JUANA. And Don Francisco Calderon? Do you wish him to think you are breaking your heart, sighing for him?

LOL. (*proudly*). No. No.

JUANA. Then you will go. Think how beautiful you will be in that new dress. Who can compare with you? Not that Americana. And when Don Paco sees you, so gay, so pretty, laughing and dancing with the señoritas and caballeros, then—little one, do you not see?

LOL. (*in gay anticipation*). Yes, Juana, yes. Then he will love me again, perhaps?

JUANA. Certainly he will. Who could help it? But that Americana, we must get her out of the way.

LOL. (*proudly dramatic*). I do not fear her now. I know her and I shall tell her what I think of her. I shall tell her that Paco loves me and me only, and she cannot have him. Then she will go away (*waving her hand*) and that will be the end of her, the wicked Americana!

JUANA. Good ! Little one, that is the spirit of an Esteban. Now, come, let me help you dress ; you must not be late for the fiesta. [Exit, R. I E.

LOL. (*soberly but proudly*). My heart is breaking, but I must laugh and be gay, and I will. After all, it is something to be an Esteban. (*Walks out with head high.*)

## CURTAIN

### ACT III

SCENE.—*The same. The afternoon of the same day.*

EDITH (*entering from R. 2 E. carrying old box and bag of gold pieces. She looks cautiously around, then places box on table*). There, that is just the thing. I am lucky to have found it, for it might have been buried for centuries, to look at it. (*Opens bag and pours gold into box.*) I've been wishing and wishing I could do something for Lolita and Dona Ysabel, but you can't offer money to an Esteban. That treasure story was just my chance. (*She fastens box and picks it up.*) I suppose I shall have to dig it up myself, since Lolita refuses to search, but they will surely never suspect the truth. (*Looks around and outdoors.*) I shall go and bury it now, while no one's around. It's my only chance and I must take it.

(*Goes out D. L.*)

CHI. (*running in D. C.*). Oh, such a fiesta (*clapping her hands*), what a lovely time they are having! And our señorita and Don Paco—they are the best of all. To see them dance—ah!

(*Tries to dance in front of mirror, bowing and almost falling over.*)

DONA (*entering R. 1 E.*). Child, what are you trying to do?

CHI. (*embarrassed*). Oh, Dona Ysabel—nothing.

DONA. I gave you permission to go to the fiesta. Why are you not there?

CHI. I just came from there. Oh, Dona, it was beautiful! And the señorita —

DONA. Dolores? Was she happy, did she dance?

CHI. Did she dance? You should have seen her. But the Americana was not there, so I came home to get ahead of her.

DONA. What are you saying?

CHI. In finding the treasure.

DONA. The treasure?

CHI. This morning Señorita Dolores told the Americana of the lost treasure, and she, the Americana, said she was going to dig until she found it, but I—I want to get it first.

DONA. Foolish girl! There is no treasure. And what would you do with it?

CHI. I'd give it to the señorita for her dowry, of course.

DONA (*touched*). You are a good child, Chichi, for all your silliness. There is no doubt a treasure would be a happy discovery, but alas! I know too well the futility of looking for it. Run along now, and enjoy yourself. (CHI. *tries to make a courtesy, falls over, jumps up and goes out hopping*. DONA *smiles*.) A funny creature, but faithful. Ah, if only our friends were as loyal as our servants. God grant my dear child may be happy. Perhaps I had better send this Americana from my home, although the money she pays is a great assistance. After all, she may mean no wrong. Who can judge another?

EDITH (*entering hastily, starts at sight of DONA, and is visibly confused*). Oh, Dona Ysabel, I—I thought you were lying down.

DONA. I have had a comfortable siesta, Miss Merrick, but it is now growing late. But why are you not at the dance? Surely all young people should be enjoying it.

EDITH. I was in the garden and I—oh, I had a headache—just a slight one—so I decided not to go.

DONA. Let me get some eau de cologne, my dear, and rub your head for you.

EDITH (*rather abruptly, for she is afraid to show her dirty hands*). Please don't bother. I'll lie down and it will be all right.

(*She hurries out R. 2 E.*)

DONA (*slightly offended*). As you wish. How strange! I really believe she was digging for the treasure. But surely so modern a young woman would not believe in the old tale, and she is supposed to possess great wealth. I cannot understand her conduct. Perhaps it is best that she should leave us. I will think seriously of it. [Exit, R. 1 E.]

(LOL.'s laugh is heard from balcony; she comes into doorway, facing out and just visible, speaking to those outside.)

LOL. Good-bye, Carmen and Elvira. And Don Felipe and Don Luis, good-bye. (*Waves her hand*.) Mercedes, Amalia (*turning as if to come in, then looking back, smiling*) and Don Paco, good-bye. (*Comes in doorway, laughing over her shoulder, runs to mirror, takes rose from hair, kisses it, goes*

*to door and throws it out of door, laughs again and comes in.*) Oh! What a perfectly lovely day! (*Dances around room.*)

JUANA (*entering D. L., taking off scarf and holding it in hand*). Then everything is all right, little one?

LOL. (*embracing her and whirling her around room*). Paco loves me, Juana! Paco loves me!

DONA (*coming in R. 1 E.*). Dolores, what is this?

LOL. (*embracing DONA*). He has told me, Aunt Ysabel, and you must forgive him. To-morrow he will come in great state to ask you for my hand. You are not angry, dearest?

DONA (*brushing her eyes with her hand and kissing LOL.*). My dear child! If you are happy, all is well. But to lose you!

LOL. I shall never leave you. We shall all live here together, so joyfully.

JUANA (*with sarcasm*). And the Americana, too?

LOL. (*proudly*). The Americana goes at once. She is nothing to Francisco; he has told me. Her words were lies.

DONA. Lolita! I thought you loved Miss Merrick!

LOL. I hate her! No. I despise her. Aunt Ysabel, you do not know what she has done, what she has said—to those rude friends of hers. I am done with her forever. She shall leave this house to-day.

DONA. But, Lolita —

CHI. (*calling from without*). Oh, lookee, lookee! (*She runs in D. L.*) See what I have found! (*She carries box, stumbles and falls, spilling shower of old coins.*) Let me alone, Juana, I must show the señoritas what is here!

JUANA. Has the creature gone crazy?

LOL. (*dropping on one knee to look at the coins*). Chichi, Chichi! What is this? (*She picks some up and shows to DONA.*) Aunt Ysabel, oh, what can it be?

DONA (*trembling, taking coins and looking at them carefully*). Child! It cannot—it—it is the Treasure of the Estebans!

LOL. (*placing gold and box on table*). The Treasure? Our Treasure?

(*She clasps the box with both arms.*)

JUANA (*trying to embrace CHI., who eludes her*). Angel! What have you done?

CHI. (*getting away and laughing*). Now the señorita will have a fine dowry!



LOL. (*seriously*). But, Chichi—you found it—it should be yours.

CHI. Mine? Caramba, no ! What do I want with money ? It is the Esteban treasure, and for you only. Thank heaven the Americana did not get it !

LOL. Miss Merrick ? She wanted it ?

CHI. She was digging away for it, but she didn't find it. Ho, ho !

*Enter EDITH, R. 2 E.*

EDITH (*coming forward and trying to look surprised*). Lolita, what is this ?

(*She points to box.*)

LOL. (*stepping in front of table and between box and EDITH*). It is mine—the Treasure of the Estebans !

EDITH (*a little gushingly*). I am so glad ; why, that's fine. You ——

LOL. You say that, you ?

DONA (*warningly*). Lolita !

LOL. (*motioning to DONA, JUANA and CHI. to go*). She shall hear what I have to say.

[*Exeunt DONA, JUANA and CHI.*

EDITH (*very much puzzled*). Lolita, dear, is there something wrong ? Have I —— ?

LOL. (*vehemently*). You ? You have deceived us, you have betrayed us. You came here pretending that you were rich, but you have attempted to steal the Esteban treasure ——

EDITH (*amazed*). To steal it ?

LOL. You say you care nothing for men, but you have tried to take my sweetheart, Francisco.

EDITH (*completely overwhelmed*). Señor Calderon is your ——

LOL. He is. For months he has loved me. We were all but betrothed when you—ah, but you did not succeed. To-day he is mine, all mine, now and forever !

(*She is completely wrought up.*)

EDITH (*beginning to understand*). But I didn't know—I never dreamed of such a thing. You never said—truly you misjudge me, Lolita. I think Don Francisco is splendid, but as for loving him, wanting him—why, I don't care that (*snapping her fingers*) for him !

LOL. Do you expect me to believe that? And you told your friends——

EDITH (*understanding still more*). Lolita! Did you overhear that speech? Is that why you—— Oh, my dear, I didn't mean a word of it. I only said that because——

LOL. All the village is talking of your conduct, saying that you are always with Francisco, walking, riding——

EDITH. I guess that is true, but I never thought anything about it. Señor Calderon was so nice and chivalrous, and never tried to make love to me——

LOL. You did not want him to make love to you?

EDITH. Of course not! How could I want his love when I—— (*She droops rather pathetically, forgetting to be strong-minded, and being just girl.*) Lolita, dear, please don't be unkind to me. I am so miserable anyway.

LOL. Miserable? But why?

(*She begins to soften.*)

EDITH (*drawing LOL. down to a seat beside her*). Honey, I'm going to tell you all about it, so there won't be any misunderstanding. Besides, I feel if I don't tell some one—my heart will break.

(*She drops her head on LOL.'s shoulder and wipes her eyes.*)

LOL. (*who is all kindness now and caresses her*). Miss Merrick dear, tell me.

EDITH (*sitting up and drying her eyes*). It's all my own fault, of course, but you see I've always had my own way and Dick would not give in; and I said he was stubborn and he said I——

LOL. (*trying hard to follow her*). Dick? Who is Dick?

EDITH. Why, Dick Hilliard, the dearest man in the world!

LOL. You love him,—this Mr. Hilliard? But——

EDITH. Of course I love him. I just couldn't help myself. But you see we quarreled, and I ran away, and I thought he would write, and he hasn't (*beginning again to break down*), and I—now I suppose I never will see him again.

(*She cries softly.*)

LOL. Poor, dear Miss Merrick. And I have been so cruel to you in all your trouble. Will you forgive me?

EDITH. Forgive you? Dolores, if it hadn't been for you, I'd be desperate.

LOL. What have I done to help you? Nothing.

EDITH. Everything. Dear child, just to be with you is a lesson to me. To see how contented you are, how sensible you are—how womanly you are! I feel as if I can never hope for happiness now, but I can try to be good.

LOL. But I want you to be happy. I want all the world to share my joy. Isn't there anything I can do?

EDITH. Not a thing.

CHI. (*coming in, carrying letters*). Here, I went to the post-office for you, Miss Merrick. (*Gives EDITH letters. Aside.*) I hope it tells her to come home.

LOL. (*watching*). Perhaps it bears good news.

EDITH (*after one hard look at letter*). Lolita! It's from him!

(*She tears it open and reads it eagerly, both CHI. and LOL. watching attentively.*)

LOL. Chichi, you good girl, you go about making every one happy.

CHI. So the Americana has a beau of her own, has she?

LOL. Of course she has—an American.

CHI. Well, perhaps even I can get a husband!

(*Runs out D. L.*)

EDITH (*who has finished reading letter*). Lolita, it is from Dick and he loves me. And he is coming—coming, as fast as the ship can bring him. (*She hugs LOL.*)

LOL. (*returning embrace*). My dear Miss Merrick!

DONA (*entering R. I E., surprised*). Lolita!

LOL. (*taking her hand and bringing her forward*). Aunt Ysabel, come and congratulate Miss Merrick. Her fiancé is coming!

DONA. My dear, is this true? (*To EDITH.*)

EDITH (*taking her other hand*). Yes, Dona Ysabel. Now you shall see a real American!

JUANA (*entering D. L.*). What is this, another Americana?

EDITH. An Americano, Juana. Don't you lose your heart to him!

JUANA. Heaven forbid!

CHI. (*from doorway*). Just wait until you see him, Juana!

JUANA (*turning on her*). Wicked one!

CHI. (*clasping hands and looking skyward*). Oh, no. I am an angel now!

(*All laugh, as CAR. and EL., followed by other girls in fiesta array, enter hurriedly.*)

CAR. Lolita, is it true—have you found the Treasure?

EL. I said it was only one of Chichi's jokes!

LOL. (*showing them the box and coins*). It is true. See for yourself.

(*The girls gather around, examine it excitedly.*)

CAR. Dear Lolita, I am so glad for your sake.

EL. (*spitefully*). Now I suppose you can get your Paco back!

EDITH (*quickly*). He is hers now, always has been and always will be!

EL. (*in surprise*). And you?

LOL. (*putting her arm around EDITH*). An Americano is coming for her—just think of it, girls!

GIRLS. An American man?

(*They run to mirror and primp, laughing.*)

LOL. (*laughing*). It's no use—he only wants the Americana!

(*All gather around EDITH and LOL., music starts, and dance begins. EDITH and DONA withdraw to one side, JUANA and CHI. to another. If LOL. does not dance, she joins EDITH. JUANA and CHI. may push furniture out of way. As the dance ends, the curtain begins to drop.*)

CURTAIN



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